



Los Angeles County  
Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



Richard J. Bruckner  
Director

October 18, 2016

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**ADOPTED**

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

40 October 18, 2016

LORI GLASGOW  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**REGARDING THE REPORT ON THE BOARD MOTION REGARDING  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING APPROVALS AND STREAMLINING OPPORTUNITIES  
(JULY 5, 2016, ITEM 3) (ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS)**

**SUBJECT**

On August 5, 2016, Department of Regional Planning (DRP) provided the Board of Supervisors (Board) with the Affordable Housing Approvals: Current Practices and Opportunities Report (Attachment 1), which identifies environmental review streamlining opportunities for affordable housing developments based on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Currently, the County unincorporated communities are not eligible for any of these streamlining options.

To make CEQA streamlining available in unincorporated urban areas, the report recommends that the Board adopt findings pursuant to Section 21071(b) (2) of the State CEQA Guidelines. Specifically, the Board action will allow developers to utilize statutory CEQA exemptions for qualified affordable housing projects that are modest in scale, consistent with the General Plan, and located outside of areas with environmental constraints. This will expedite the CEQA review process, potentially result in cost savings, and incentivize the development of affordable housing in the unincorporated areas. Upon Board approval of a resolution (Attachment 2), DRP will file the draft findings with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and return to the Board for final adoption after 30 days, during which OPR may submit comments regarding the draft findings.

In a concurrent effort, DRP will work in conjunction with the Chief Executive Office to continue to advocate for changes to CEQA that would further expand CEQA streamlining eligibility to additional unincorporated communities. Furthermore, DRP will continue to pursue opportunities to expedite the entitlement of affordable housing developments, including coordination with other County departments that are part of the entitlement process.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:**

Approve the attached resolution, in which the Board finds that the Los Angeles County General Plan supports principles of compact development.

**PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

On July 5, 2016, the Board instructed the Director Planning to report back in 30 days on existing practices employed by the County to expedite entitlement and environmental reviews for affordable housing developments and opportunities that may exist to further expedite these reviews.

**Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

This action supports the County's Strategic Plan, Goal 1, Operational Effectiveness/Fiscal Sustainability, and Goal 2, Community Support and Responsiveness, by providing the public with services that are delivered in a timely manner and respond to economic and social challenges.

**FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

None.

**FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

On October 6, 2015, the Board adopted the Los Angeles County General Plan, which provides the policy framework for how and where the unincorporated Los Angeles County will grow through the year 2035.

The attached resolution affirms that the General Plan supports principles of compact development as required in CEQA for unincorporated urban areas to be eligible for streamlining.

**ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION**

Approval of this resolution will not have an effect on the environment and therefore, this action is exempt from CEQA, pursuant to Section 15378 (b) (4) of the CEQA Guidelines.

**IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)**

The Board's approval of the resolution furthers DRP's ability to expedite affordable housing entitlement approvals.

**CONCLUSION**

Should you have any questions regarding the resolution, please contact Connie Chung at [cchung@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:cchung@planning.lacounty.gov) or (213) 974-6417.

The Honorable Board of Supervisors

10/18/2016

Page 3

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard J. Bruckner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

RICHARD J. BRUCKNER

Director

RJB:MC:CC:lm

Enclosures

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel  
Beaches and Harbors  
Chief Executive Office  
Community Development Commission  
Fire Department  
Parks and Recreation  
Public Health  
Public Works

**Attachment C: Findings**  
**CEQA Exemption 21071(b)(2)**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
FINDING THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENT  
WITH COMPACT DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES AS DEFINED BY THE  
CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)**

**WHEREAS**, the County of Los Angeles (County) is authorized to prepare a general plan, pursuant to the State Law (commencing with §65300 of the California Government Code);

**WHEREAS**, the California Government Code requires that each city and county adopt a general plan "for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning";

**WHEREAS**, the County is authorized to adopt amendments to the County Zoning Ordinance, pursuant to the State Law (commencing with §65800 of the California Government Code);

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Supervisors (Board) conducted a duly noticed public hearing on the matter of the update to the Los Angeles County General Plan on March 24, 2015, and indicated its intent to approve the General Plan and certify its Final Environmental Impact Report;

**WHEREAS**, the Board conducted a public hearing on the matter of the update to the Los Angeles County General Plan on October 6, 2015, and adopted Project No. 02-305-(1-5), which included the following:

1. General Plan. Provides guiding principles and establishes the framework for existing and future planning efforts for the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, and includes goals, policies, implementation programs, figures, and maps. The Zoning Code (Title 22) of the Los Angeles County Code is an implementation tool of the General Plan.

The General Plan is based on the following guiding principles:

- Employ Smart Growth: Shape new communities to align housing with jobs and services; and protect and conserve the County's natural and cultural resources, including the character of rural communities.
- Ensure community services and infrastructure are sufficient to accommodate growth: Coordinate an equitable sharing of public and private costs associated with providing appropriate community services and infrastructure to meet growth needs.
- Provide the foundation for a strong and diverse economy: Protect areas that generate employment and promote programs that support a stable and well



- educated workforce. This will provide a foundation for a jobs-housing balance and a vital and competitive economy in the unincorporated areas.
- Promote excellence in environmental resource management: Carefully manage the County's natural resources, such as air, water, wildlife habitats, mineral resources, agricultural land, forests, and open space in an integrated way that is both feasible and sustainable.
  - Provide healthy, livable and equitable communities: Design communities that incorporate their cultural and historic surroundings, are not overburdened by nuisance and negative environmental factors, and provide reasonable access to food systems.

General Plan policies and programs that promote sustainable development include the following:

#### Transit Oriented Districts (TOD)

TODs are areas within one-half mile of a transit station that promote transit-oriented development, or pedestrian-friendly and community-serving uses that encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use. The TOD Program is designed to work in conjunction with regional and statewide efforts to incentivize transit-oriented development, and create infill development opportunities in many unincorporated communities.

#### Complete Streets and Active Transportation

The General Plan includes policies to ensure that the County plans for the routine accommodation of all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, users of public transit, motorists, children, seniors and people with disabilities in compliance with the Complete Streets Act of 2007.

#### Employment Protection Districts (EPD)

EPDs are economically-viable industrial and employment-rich lands recommended for protection from conversion to non-industrial uses.

#### Conservation and Natural Resources Element

The Conservation and Natural Resources Element addresses dedicated open space; woodlands, coastal areas, forests, wetlands, and the Significant Ecological Areas (SEA) Program; water quality and watershed management; Agricultural Resource Areas (ARAs) and sustainable agriculture; and other natural and historical resources.

#### Significant Ecological Areas

An SEA designation is given to land that contains significant biological resources. Individual SEAs include undisturbed or lightly disturbed habitats that support valuable and threatened species, linkages and corridors to promote species movement, and are sized to support sustainable populations of its component species.

#### Agricultural Resource Areas

ARAs promote the preservation of agricultural land. ARAs consist of farmland identified by the California Department of Conservation and the Los Angeles County Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures. The ARAs are designed to encourage agricultural uses and ensure compatibility between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses through buffering, development standards, and design requirements.

#### Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP)

The CCAP is a sub-component of the Air Quality Element. The CCAP, in conjunction with other concurrent climate change and sustainability initiatives, represents the County's commitment to the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32), which was passed by the California legislature in 2006.

The CCAP identifies greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions related to community activities in the unincorporated areas; establishes a reduction target consistent with AB 32; and provides a roadmap for successfully implementing actions selected by the County to reduce GHG emissions. The County conducted an analysis to identify a reduction of 11% below 2010 levels is needed to achieve consistency with the State's AB 32 goals and the California Air Resource Board Scoping Plan.

The majority of emission reductions are gained from state building energy efficiency standards and mandates for renewable energy generation.

2. Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the General Plan in compliance with CEQA. The Final EIR contains a summary of the potential environmental effects of the General Plan, the recommended mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid those effects, and the level of significance after mitigation. The Board determined that where significant adverse environmental effects of the Project, as described in the Final EIR, have not been reduced to a level of less than significant, the Project benefits, such as, specific social, economic, legal, technological or other considerations outweigh the environmental effects of the project as stated in the CEQA Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations for the project.

**WHEREAS**, the Housing Element in the General Plan was adopted by the Board in February 2014 pursuant to Government Code Section 65588, and is included by reference as part of the General Plan;

**WHEREAS**, as required by State law, the State Department of Housing and Community Development certified the Housing Element in April 2014;



**WHEREAS**, the primary focus of the Housing Element is to ensure decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing for current and future residents of the unincorporated areas, including those with special needs;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles, per Section 21071(b)(2) of the state CEQA Guidelines:

1. Finds that the General Plan, zoning ordinance, and related policies and programs are consistent with principles that encourage compact development in a manner that promotes efficient transportation systems, economic growth, affordable housing, energy efficiency, and an appropriate balance of jobs and housing; and
2. Finds that the General Plan protects the environment, open space, and agricultural areas.
3. Directs the Department of Regional Planning to file these findings in draft form with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.

The foregoing resolution was on the 18th day of October, 2016, adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles.



LORI GLASGOW,  
Executive Officer-Clerk of the  
Board of Supervisors of the County  
of Los Angeles

By

Carla Little  
Deputy

APPROVED AS TO FORM  
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY COUNSEL

By

[Signature]